

# Lebanon, Russia Boycott 'Friends of Syria' Meet

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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*Russia and Lebanon have announced they will boycott a meeting of the so-called "Friends of Syria" group in Tunisia scheduled to be held on February 24, **Press TV** reports.*

Lebanese Foreign Minister Adnan Mansour said on Tuesday the decision not to participate in the meeting was in line with the decision to "dissociate Lebanon from the developments in Syria," a Press TV correspondent reported.

Meanwhile, the Russian foreign ministry issued a statement on Tuesday saying the meeting in Tunis followed the "purpose of supporting one side against another in an internal conflict."

"We cannot accept the offer to attend this meeting," the Russian statement added.

Tunisian Foreign Minister Rafik Ben Abdessalam said on February 12 that Tunis would host the meeting, which was proposed by France and the United States.

Syria has been experiencing unrest since mid-March 2011, with demonstrations being held both against and in favor of President Bashar al-Assad.

The Syrian president accused certain states of blocking attempts to end the unrest in Syria during a meeting with Russian Chairman of the State Duma International Affairs Committee Alexei Pushkov on February 20. Assad said "some foreign countries" are fueling the turmoil in Syria by supporting and funding "armed terrorist groups fighting against the government."

On February 16, the United Nations General Assembly approved a non-binding resolution, introduced by Egypt, which supports an Arab League plan concerning the unrest in Syria.

Syrian Ambassador to the UN Bashar Jaafari said after the UN vote that the resolution "would only lead to a tightening of the crisis and more violence in the region as a whole."

Jaafari added that the United Nations was in danger of being used by "some member states" as a means of providing cover for "armed terrorist groups" in Syria.

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